

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for detecting an ambient condition, comprising:

a first sensor to determine the presence of a condition, and provide an alarm signal;

a filter disposed proximate to the first sensor such that an airflow passes through the filter before reaching the first sensor, wherein the filter is configured to prevent a particulate located in the airflow from reaching the first sensor;

an airflow monitor that is configured to detect changes in the airflow resulting from the particulate collecting in the filter, the airflow monitor comprises [[ing]] a first element exposed to an airflow and a second element shielded from the airflow and exposed to an ambient environment, wherein the first element is configured to determine an airflow condition, the second element is configured to determine an ambient condition, and the airflow monitor is configured to provide an airflow signal; and

a processor that provides a status message indicative of the state of the alarm signal and the airflow signal.

2. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said airflow monitor comprises a thermistor.

3. (Original) The device of claim 1, further comprising a second sensor to determine the presence of a second condition and provide a second alarm signal.

4. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said first sensor is a photoelectric smoke sensor.

5. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said first sensor is an ionization-type smoke sensor.
6. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said first sensor is a heat sensor.
7. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said first sensor is a relative humidity sensor.
8. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said first sensor is a CO₂ gas sensor.
9. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1, wherein the ~~device further comprises an air filter comprises~~ [[ing]] a polyfoam portion configured to prevent passage of visible particulate matter and a screen portion configured to prevent passage of microscopic matter.
10. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 1, wherein the airflow monitor is a negative temperature coefficient thermistor and the airflow signal is a temperature difference between the first and second element.
11. (Original) The device of claim 1, wherein said processor compares the monitored airflow level to a low airflow threshold and provides an airflow alarm signal indicative of a low airflow level when the monitored airflow level is lower than the low airflow threshold.
12. (Original) The device of claim 11, wherein the low airflow threshold is adjustable.

13. (Original) The device of claim 11, wherein said low airflow threshold is substantially equal to ambient airflow.

14. (Original) The device of claim 11, further comprising a second sensor to determine the presence of a second condition and provide a second alarm signal.

15. (Original) The device of claim 14, wherein at least one of said first and second sensors is adapted for location in a HVAC duct.

16. (Currently Amended) A detection system for detecting ambient conditions, comprising:
first sensing means for determining the presence of a first ambient condition and for providing a first alarm signal;

filtering means disposed proximate to the first sensing means such that an airflow passes through the filtering means before reaching the first sensing means, wherein the filtering means is configured to prevent a particulate located in the airflow from reaching the first sensing means;

airflow monitoring means that is configured to detect changes in the airflow resulting from the particulate collecting in the filtering means, the airflow monitoring means comprises [[ing]] a first element exposed to an airflow and a second element shielded from the airflow and exposed to an ambient environment, wherein the first element is configured to determine an airflow condition, the second element is configured to determine an ambient condition, and airflow monitoring means provides an airflow signal; and

processing means coupled to said sensing means and said airflow monitoring means for providing a status message.

17. (Original) The detection system of claim 16, wherein said sensing means is a photoelectric smoke sensor.

18. (Original) The detection system of claim 16, wherein said sensing means is an ionization-type smoke sensor.

19. (Original) The detection system of claim 16, wherein said sensing means is adapted for location in a HVAC duct.

20. (Original) The detection system of claim 16, further comprising a second sensing means for detecting presence of a second condition.

21. (Currently Amended) A method of using a device for detecting ambient conditions, comprising:

sensing the presence of an ambient condition and providing an alarm signal;
monitoring an airflow rate through the device;
comparing the airflow rate through the device with a chosen threshold airflow to provide an airflow signal; and

providing a status message indicative of the state of the alarm signal and the airflow signal,

wherein an airflow monitor is utilized to monitor the airflow rate through the device, the airflow monitor is configured to detect changes in the airflow rate and having comprises a first element exposed to an airflow and a second element shielded from the airflow and exposed to an ambient environment is utilized to monitor the airflow rate through the device, wherein the first element is configured to determine an airflow condition, the second element is configured to determine an ambient condition.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the ambient condition is a smoke condition.